

T-O-P S-E-C-R-E-T

13 October 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: NIE 11-10-66: WARNING OF SOVIET INTENTION
TO ATTACK

We have now talked to Navy about their footnote. Admiral Fluckey wants to make two points:

1. He thinks that if the Soviets attack, they will almost certainly go for maximum weight rather than maximum surprise and hence (as we say in Conclusion C) our chances of providing warning are better than even.

Comment: Strictly speaking, this is not germane to the estimate, which does not concern itself with the relative likelihood of various sorts of Soviet attack. But the point is not entirely irrelevant, and will certainly be of some interest to the reader.

Recommendation: That we let Navy take the following footnote to Conclusion C, and to the corresponding paragraph of Discussion:

Rear Admiral Eugene B. Fluckey, USN, the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (Intelligence), Department of the Navy, believes that any general hostilities launched by the Soviets against the US or NATO during the next five years would almost certainly be initiated by "a maximum weight, all-out attack" and hence that the chances of providing warning would be better than even.

2. He wants to say, in the Conclusions, that some of the preparations for an all out attack would be detectable.

Comment: A statement like this is already in paragraph 2 of the Discussion.

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Recommendation: That we use the paragraph 2 statement in Conclusion B. This actually improves the Conclusion by stressing again the difference between "detection" and "warning." The only possible drawback is that, by permitting this change in the agreed text of the estimate, we would be opening the door to further changes. This does not seem to us like a very real danger. With the suggested amendment, Conclusion B would read as follows (new material underlined):

Warning is not likely to be either complete or equivocal. Were the USSR to prepare to attack the US, some of the preparations would almost certainly be susceptible of detection by one or more means. But even when increased Soviet readiness is apparent, it will be difficult to know whether Moscow means to attack, to take a stiffer stand in a crisis, to deter, or to be prepared to defend and retaliate. For these reasons, the political climate will continue to be a critical factor in our analysis.

The wording of these changes has been accepted by Admiral Fluckey. If they are acceptable to you, we'll try to clear them by telephone with the other USIB members as soon as possible.


Acting Director
National Estimates

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